

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 LONDON 12330 01 OF 02 031141Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05
H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15
NSCE-00 SSO-00 ICAE-00 INRE-00 /073 W
-----072687 031225Z /45

O P 031115Z AUG 78

FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8768

INFO AMEMBASSY PRETORIA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY MAPUTO PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY GABORONE PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY LILONGWE PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY LAGOS PRIORITY

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 LONDON 12330

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PDEV UK RH

SUMMARY: RHODESIA: DEBATE IN PARLIAMENT

SUMMARY: GOVERNMENT AND OPPOSITION DIVIDED BY SIX VOTES
IN YESTERDAY'S DEBATE ON RHODESIA. THE SPLIT IS MORE
SYMBOLIC THAN SUBSTANTIVE AT THIS POINT BUT MARKS AN
INTERRUPTION IN BRITISH BIPARTISANSHIP ON RHODESIA AND
PUSHES THE TORIES CLOSER TO A COMMITMENT TO VOTE AGAINST
CONTINUED SANCTIONS IN NOVEMBER. END SUMMARY.

1. WITH BISHOP MUZOREWA LOOKING DOWN FROM THE GALLERY,
PARLIAMENT YESTERDAY DEBATED AN ADJOURNMENT MOTION ON
THE QUESTION OF RHODESIA. THE GOVERNMENT CARRIED THE
VOTE BY SIX, 171 TO 165. DAVID OWEN, EITHER BECAUSE OF
HIS SLIPPED DISC OR POLITICAL CAUTION, OPENED THE DIS-
CUSSION WITH A SUBDUED PRESENTATION DESCRIBING THE
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 LONDON 12330 01 OF 02 031141Z

MERITS OF GENERAL WESTERN DIPLOMACY AND RECENT SUCCESSES
IN NAMIBIA AND ZAIRE/ANGOLA. OWEN SAID THIS KIND OF
PROGRESS UNDERScoreD THE NEED TO WORK WITH VARIOUS
INTERNATIONAL GROUPINGS SUCH AS THE UN, THE COMMONWEALTH
THE OAU, AND WESTERN ALLIES IN ORDER TO BRING BRITISH
INFLUENCE TO BEAR ON AFRICAN PROBLEMS. HE DOUBTED THERE
WERE SERIOUS DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE FRONT BENCHES OF

BOTH PARTIES BUT APPEALED TO THE TORIES NOT TO MAKE RHODESIA A PARTY ISSUE IN THE WEEKS PRECEDING A POSSIBLE ELECTION IN BRITAIN.

2. OWEN SAID A VOTE AGAINST THE CALLAGHAN GOVERNMENT WOULD BE MISCONSTRUED ABROAD. TO APPEAR WILLING TO LIFT SANCTIONS, HE SAID, WOULD MEAN CONFRONTATION WITH MOST OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY; TO ABANDON SANCTIONS MEANS TO ABANDON INFLUENCE, A CONCEPT WHICH THE US SENATE HAD RECOGNIZED IN SUPPORTING THE CASE/JAVITS AMENDMENT.

3. DESPITE WEEKS OF PREPARATION, THE REPLY OF JOHN DAVIES LACKED CLARITY AND THE ELECTRICITY THAT SO MANY HAD EXPECTED. HE EMPHASIZED THAT CONSERVATIVES HAD ALWAYS SOUGHT TO AVOID PARTISANSHIP ON RHODESIA BUT THEN WENT ON TO REVIEW OPPORTUNITIES MISSED BY THE LABOR GOVERNMENT AND ITS "WEAK-KNEED" FOREIGN SECRETARY. DAVIES LAMENTED THAT GUERRILLA GUNS SHOULD ACT AS A VETO ON NEGOTIATIONS. THE INTERNAL AGREEMENT IS INADEQUATE, HE SAID, AND RECOGNITION WOULD BE PREMATURE, BUT THE SALISBURY GOVERNMENT DESERVED SUPPORT AND ENCOURAGEMENT. BRITISH NEUTRALITY IS A DERELICTION OF RESPONSIBILITY, AND ENCOURAGEMENT OF THE REGIME WOULD SERVE TO REDRESS THE BALANCE BETWEEN THE PARTIES.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 LONDON 12330 01 OF 02 031141Z

4. ONLY AT THE END OF HIS SPEECH DID DAVIES MENTION SANCTIONS. HE SAID THE CONSERVATIVES WOULD WAIT TO DECIDE THIS ISSUE, BUT IF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL SEEMED INTENT ON GENUINE ELECTIONS IN DECEMBER, THEN TORIES WOULD VOTE TO LIFT SANCTIONS WHEN THE QUESTION COMES BEFORE PARLIAMENT IN NOVEMBER.

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 LONDON 12330 02 OF 02 031140Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05

H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15

NSCE-00 SSO-00 ICAE-00 INRE-00 /073 W

-----072675 031226Z /45

O P 031115Z AUG 78

FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8769

INFO AMEMBASSY PRETORIA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY MAPUTO PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY GABORONE PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY LILONGWE PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY LAGOS PRIORITY

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 LONDON 12330

5. COMMENT: WHILE HEATED AT TIMES, THE RHODESIA DEBATE SEEMED ANTI-CLIMATIC IN PART BECAUSE THE TORY LEADERSHIP REFRAINED FROM MAJOR DISAGREEMENT WITH THE GOVERNMENT AND IN PART BECAUSE SO MANY MP'S HAD ALREADY DRIFTED AWAY FOR THE SUMMER HOLIDAYS. STILL, THE VOTE HAS SYMBOLIC IF NOT SUBSTANTIVE SIGNIFICANCE. THE GOVERNMENT WON ONLY BY SIX VOTES FROM THE LIBERAL PARTY WHOSE FOREIGN AFFAIRS SPOKESMAN, JEEMY THORPE, REVEALED HIS INFORMATION THAT SMITH HAD STATED PRIVATELY THERE WOULD BE NO ELECTIONS IN RHODESIA THIS YEAR. MORE IMPORTANTLY, THE TORIES STUCK TOGETHER IN THE VOTE, ALTHOUGH THERE ARE PROFOUND DISAGREEMENTS WITHIN THE PARTY WHICH DAVIES HOPED TO GLOSS OVER WITH TOUGH RHETORIC. THE CONSERVATIVES SEALED IN A FORMAL VOTE AN
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 LONDON 12330 02 OF 02 031140Z

INTERRUPTION IF NOT NECESSARILY AN END OF POLITICAL BI-PARTISANSHIP ON RHODESIA, AND THE DIVISION IS LIKELY TO BE OVERPLAYED AND MISUNDERSTOOD IN SALISBURY AND FRONT-LINE CAPITALS.

6. ON SANCTIONS, DAVIES REPEATED PUBLICLY WHAT HE HAD TOLD US TWO WEEKS AGO, THAT THE CONSERVATIVE PARTY, IN POWER OR IN OPPOSITION, WOULD VOTE AGAINST THE EXTENSION OF SANCTIONS IF THE REGIME SEEMED SET ON FAIR ELECTIONS. THIS STILL LEAVES THE PARTY CONSIDERABLE ROOM FOR INTERPRETATION AND ESSENTIALLY POSTPONES THE ISSUE. WHILE UNHAPPY WITH OWEN'S POLICY AND PERSONALITY, MARGARET THATCHER HAD TOLD HER CONSERVATIVE

BUSINESS COMMITTEE LAST WEEK THAT SHE DID NOT WISH THE PARTY TO COMMIT ITSELF TO A POSITION SO FAR IN ADVANCE OF A POSSIBLE GENERAL ELECTION HERE, AND RIGHT-WING MP'S RELUCTANTLY ACCEPTED HER JUDGMENT. WHILE THE IMAGE IS DIFFICULT TO VISUALIZE, JOHN DAVIES THEREFORE TOOK WHIP AND CHAIR IN HAND YESTERDAY WITH A VIEW AS MUCH TOWARDS HIS OWN BACKBENCHERS AS TO THE GOVERNMENT, BUT THE EFFECT WAS TO PUSH THE PARTY CLOSER TO A COMMITMENT TO OPPOSE SANCTIONS IN NOVEMBER.

BREWSTER

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: DEBATES, POLITICAL SETTLEMENT, CENTRAL LEGISLATURE, POLITICAL SITUATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 03 aug 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978LONDON12330
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780318-0177
Format: TEL
From: LONDON
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t197808103/aaaadihr.tel
Line Count: 181
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 82160358-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 29 apr 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1549384
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: RHODESIA: DEBATE IN PARLIAMENT
TAGS: PDEV, UK, RH
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/82160358-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014